

## Monthly Press Release

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### FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD REPORTS CONTINUED LOWER MORTGAGE INTEREST RATES

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Housing Finance Board today reported that the average interest rate on conventional 30-year, fixed-rate, mortgage loans decreased 16 basis points to 5.74 percent during May. The average interest rate on 15-year, fixed-rate loans decreased 4 basis points to 5.52 percent during May. These rates pertain to mortgages closed during the May 23 - 30 period. Typically, the interest rate is determined 30 to 45 days before the loan is closed. Thus, the reported rates depict market conditions prevailing in mid -to- late April. Since then, mortgage commitment rates, as reported by Freddie Mac and others, have fallen.

The contract rate on the composite of all mortgage loans (fixed- and adjustable-rate) decreased 11 basis points to 5.59 percent during May. The effective interest rate, which reflects the amortization of initial fees and charges, also decreased 11 basis points to 5.64 percent. The average contract rate on fixed-rate mortgages, decreased 14 basis points to 5.70 percent in May, while the average contract rate on adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) decreased 5 basis points to 4.93 percent.

Initial fees and charges were 0.35 percent of the loan balance in May, up from 0.32 percent in April. Sixty-five percent of the purchase-money mortgage loans originated in May were "no-point" mortgages, up from 63 percent in April. The average term was 26.7 years in May, the same as in April. The average loan-to-price ratio in May was 72.7 percent, down from 73.8 percent in April. The average loan amount decreased by \$2,800 to \$166,200 in May, while the average house purchase price increased by \$200 to \$244,300.

The National Average Contract Mortgage Rate for the Purchase of Previously Occupied Homes by Combined Lenders, a popular ARM index, was 5.58 percent based on loans closed in May. This is a decrease of 0.10 percent from the previous month.

Recorded information on this index is available by calling (202) 408-2940. The June index value will be announced on July 25, 2003.

The Federal Housing Finance Board maintains telephone lines that give recorded information on the current value of many of the interest rates reported in this release. That phone number is (202) 408-2624. This recording will be next updated on July 25, 2003.

*Technical note: The data is based on a monthly survey of major lenders that are asked to report the terms and conditions on all conventional, single-family, fully amortized, purchase- money loans closed the last five working days of the month. The data thus excludes FHA- insured and VA-guaranteed mortgages, refinancing loans, and balloon loans. This month's data is based on 41,511 reported loans from 96 lenders, representing savings associations, mortgage companies, commercial banks, and mutual savings banks. The effective interest rate includes the amortization of initial fees and charges over a 10-year period, which is the historical assumption of the average life of a mortgage loan. The data is weighted to reflect the shares of mortgage lending by lender size and lender type as reported in the latest release of the Federal Reserve Board's Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data.*